

To preserve and protect Long Lake, its watershed and ecosystems



Long Lake

Preservation Association

Issue 74 • Spring 2024



— Photo by Byron Crouse

President's Message

I am writing this “President’s Message” from South Carolina, where I have been spending time on Lake Jocassee, volunteering time to study loons that have been wintering on this freshwater reservoir. They are going through their molt, when they are flightless, changing into their breeding plumage and preparing to migrate north. That’s one of them shown above. It will be in full breeding plumage in one to two weeks following the date of the photograph.

It seems a fitting analogy for the LLPA, as we too are preparing for our changes, and now is the time to fly. The LLPA has benefitted from a good number of you volunteering this past 12 months and helping

Continued on Page 2

Board of Directors

President:

Byron J. Crouse
bjcrouse@wisc.edu

Vice President:

Sandra Hovey Campbell
sandycampbell11@gmail.com

Secretary:

Jennifer Brigham
jenniferbrigham1959@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Chuck Lawrence
(715) 236-7938
chuck@ricelaketax.com

Past President:

Joe Thrasher
ltlport@gmail.com

At Large Directors

Eric Anderson
wi.fisherman@gmail.com

Randy Champeau
randychampeau@gmail.com

Sage Dunham
contract@hunthill.org

DJ Ehrike
musicaldje@yahoo.com

Randy Krautkramer
rlkrautkramer@gmail.com

Jeff Linkenheld
jlinkenheld@arcdesign.com

Donnie Marker
donnie@lakeplace.com

Brent Nolte
brentnolte@yahoo.com

Randy Poznansky
randypoz@gmail.com

Jim Schlesinger
jaschhles@gmail.com

Camp Tomahawk

Brian Halloran
(612) 261-2456
bhalloran@northernstar.org

LLPA Addresses:

PO Box 336
Birchwood, WI 54817

Visit our web site

www.longlakellpa.org

President's Message continued

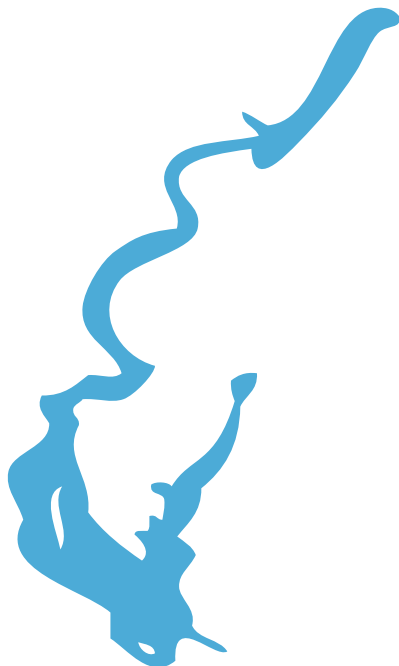
us prepare our Comprehensive Lake Management Plan, and by the time you read this we should be submitting our Aquatic Plant Management Plan along with our Aquatic Invasive Species Rapid Response Plan. Much of this would not have been possible without the partnerships we have. Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary, Tomahawk Scout Camp, Long Lake Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Regional Planning Commission and the Washburn County Land and Water Conservation Office, to name a few, are outstanding partners for the LLPA. In addition to your helping gather required data for these plans, we appreciated the comments a number of you submitted during the public comment period for these plans. This leads into our upcoming Annual Meeting.

Our Annual Meeting will be Saturday June 1, 2024 at the Tomahawk Scout Camp with registration starting at 8:30am and the meeting starting at 9am. We will be focusing on the opportunities we now have because of having an approved Comprehensive Lake Management Plan. Megan Mader, our Lake Scientist, will review the Plan. We want to hear your comments and ideas on what steps we should be implementing in the short term and long term. We will also have time for you to meet with members for the different LLPA committees and learn about their activities and ways that you could have fun participating in these activities.

I hope to see many of you at the LLPA Annual Meeting.

Byron J. Crouse

President – Long Lake Preservation Association



Native aquatic plant blue flag iris (Iris versicolor)

THE WINTER THAT ALMOST WASN'T

Article by Joe Thrasher

Long Lake welcomed in 2024 to the sounds of Auld Lang Syne-and waves lapping the shoreline. Which they continued to do until ice up finally came on January 12, the only post-New Year freeze up in the 30 plus years for which LLPA has records (yes, that really is open water in the photo from New Year's day). And by March 15 the waves were lapping again, after only nine weeks of ice. The bar graph shows how little this is historically. While small villages of ice fishing shacks are seen most years, this winter there were at most a handful of portable shelters, pulled not by pickups but by ATVs or by hand. LLPA's planned Fish Sticks project had to be canceled due to unsafe ice conditions (see accompanying article).

Not only was winter unusually warm, it was also dry. Local snowmobile trails never opened. Many snow blowers went unused, as no single snowfall was deeper than most folks were willing to shovel, with most snow coming in late March and early April. Ground was brown for most of the winter. At this writing we are definitely under what NOAA classifies as abnormally dry conditions, which is just short of drought.

This phenomena was not just local. According to a New York Times article, winter was "weirdly warm" for half of the world's population. According to NASA's Earth Observatory, at the end of February on average the Great Lakes are collectively 40 per cent iced up, but this year they were 96 per cent ice free.

Was this just a normal weather variation which coincidentally happened in so many places all at once? Maybe, but according to the Times separate studies by Climate Central, an independent research group in New Jersey, and Copernicus, the European Union's climate monitoring organization, concluded otherwise. They found from voluminous data what we have been hearing from multiple sources: this is actual climate *change*, not just normal variation. Which means it is a window into the future, a harbinger of what is to come (for instance, a government sponsored study published in 2016 predicted that walleye populations in Wisconsin will be gradually replaced by largemouth bass as lakes warm).

The evidence of the causes of climate change, and what we as individuals can do about it, is well beyond the scope of this newsletter (we note, however, that the Climate Central study concluded that some of the temperatures recorded around the world this winter would be "virtually impossible without the influence of carbon pollution"). Suffice it to say the information is out there, readily available to anyone who will look. What this past winter seems to be telling us is, while normal variation is always to be expected and may have played some role here, this is more-this is real.



— Graph Courtesy of Paul Skawinski, UW-Extension Lakes



View From Holy Island, New Year's Day 2024 — Photo by Randy Poznansky

LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Megan Mader
Northwest Regional Planning Commission

The LLPA applied for a planning grant through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources surface water grant program and was awarded \$25,000 in March 2023 to develop the 2024-2034 Long Lake Comprehensive Lake Management Plan (CLMP). In addition to the CLMP, the LLPA was able to obtain funding for two additional studies within the grant: a survey of LLPA members and Long Lake residents to determine management goals, and a shoreline habitat assessment to examine the state of Long Lake's shoreline with a coarse woody habitat assessment (see accompanying photo) to document available habitat for fish and wildlife. These studies, other supplemental materials, and the CLMP are available on the LLPA website at <https://longlakellpa.org/resources/>.

The CLMP used information from past studies and monitoring activities (fisheries, aquatic plants, water quality, etc.) in addition to the survey and shoreline habitat assessment to examine potential management needs. The CLMP relied heavily on the survey, along with multiple public comment periods and visioning sessions, to guide its goals and objectives. As such, the LLPA Board of Directors has identified three priority projects for 2024:

1. Develop and adopt an Aquatic Plant Management Plan for Long Lake in order to manage dense areas of weeds that impede navigation.
2. Develop a Rapid Response Plan so that management can begin swiftly if a new aquatic invasive species is identified in Long Lake.
3. Develop a Preferred Enhanced Wake Zone map to identify recreation areas that will lessen impacts to the shoreline and sensitive aquatic habitat areas.

The CLMP contains an extensive background report about Long Lake and its shoreline, watershed, water quality, aquatic plants, fisheries, and more. Following the background report is an overview of lake management tools and their potential use in Long Lake. Following that are the goals and objectives of the plan. This section is a comprehensive list of goals and objectives to reach over the course of the next ten years. To meet those goals, the plan includes an implementation plan that outlines target dates for completion of each proposed project. The plan is intended to be a living document that can be regularly reviewed and updated as projects are completed and as management needs change.



Assessing Woody Habitat

In the meantime, we will be exploring a phosphorus study to find out the major sources of phosphorus into the lake. Phosphorus is an essential nutrient in lakes, but too much of it can create algal blooms. By knowing where it is coming from, we can implement various management tools.

An exciting development in the lake management 'toolbox' is nanobubble technology, which uses tiny bubbles to help the lake process excess phosphorus so it can't contribute to algal blooms. This technology is very new, so we are keeping an eye on a nearby lake district to see how well it works for them. In addition, we are looking into installing research buoys that take water quality measurements at regular intervals. These buoys will supply valuable water quality information in real time to help understand the lake and what is happening.



The LLPA thanks all 273 people who took the survey, everyone who submitted their comments on the CLMP, and the multitude of folks who volunteered to help with the shoreline habitat assessment. These contributions – from taking a quick survey to spending hours in a boat documenting the shoreline – were instrumental in crafting the 2024-2034 Long Lake Comprehensive Lake Management Plan.

SUMMER PROGRAMS AT HUNT HILL

Summer is just around the corner, and with it comes a plethora of exciting programs at Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary to fill

your days with adventure and learning. From citizen science opportunities to recreational experiences, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Whether you're passionate about wildlife conservation, eager to sharpen your skills and learn more, or simply looking for some family-friendly fun, Hunt Hill has you covered.

Article by Marissa Ginger
Hunt Hill Program Coordinator

For those looking for citizen science opportunities, we invite you to attend our Bat Roost Counts in the evenings of June 1st and July 12th. There are a few bat houses around the Hunt Hill campus, and once the sun comes out, you'll count the bats waking up and emerging from their home to catch some breakfast.

If you're wanting to see Hunt Hill from a different perspective, the Summer Solstice Paddle may be for you! The paddle is a great opportunity for all members of the family to come out and spend June 21st, the longest day of the year, on Hunt Hill's Twin Lakes. If you'd rather take a hike, our trails are open from sunrise to sunset every day.

A beloved favorite is our Cakes at the Lake series, in partnership with the LLPA. Cakes at the Lake is an all-you-care-to-eat breakfast with buttermilk and specialty pancakes, sausage, fresh fruit, and beverages. Following breakfast, guests are encouraged to stay for the free hour-long nature presentation. Block off your mornings on the following Saturdays: June 29th, featuring Jeff Fischer presenting Sharing Insights on Wisconsin Dragonflies; July 20th, where Craig Roberts will dive into the world of The Dinosaur of Fresh Waters; August 10th, when John Bates presents on Our Ancient Ancestors; and August 24th, when Licia Johnson will captivate us with Moose Mania!

For further details on any of these programs or more opportunities, please visit hunthill.org or give us a call at 715-635-6543. Let the summer adventures begin at Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary!

FISH STICKS UPDATE



Article by Randy Krautkramer

LLPA, with the participation of Camp Tomahawk and, more recently, the Long Lake Chamber, commenced Fish Sticks placements in 2015. Fish Sticks involves sinking bundles of live trees perpendicular to the shoreline to create habitat for underwater fauna, from invertebrates up the food web to fish. To date there have been eight placements of multiple bundles along the shores of Camp Tomahawk.

Fish Sticks placements are normally done in February or early March when there is sufficient ice to support vehicles and equipment to move the freshly cut trees into place on the ice. LLPA has an approved permit for placement in 2023, 2024 and 2025. Unfortunately, poor ice conditions have not allowed us to safely place Fish Sticks on the lake in 2023 or 2024. Hopefully 2025 will be a more normal winter and we can resume our Fish Sticks placements.

For a more detailed explanation of how the Fish Sticks are constructed and placed see the LLPA web site at <http://longlakellpa.org>. Look under Our Projects and click on Fish Sticks.

LONG LAKE NEEDS YOU!

Happy Spring to all! With the warm weather approaching the lake will become active again from residents and vacationers. As we enter the “busy season” of 2024 we have a completed Lake Management Plan that has recently been approved by the Wisconsin DNR. Thank you to the many volunteers last year who participated in various activities like shoreline surveys, photos, and invasive plant education to help make this plan happen.



Article by Jeff Linkenheld

So what's next? The Lake Management Plan forms a blueprint for future actions and priorities to maintain the quality of Long Lake. Through various surveys and other outreach, the potential threats to our beautiful lake have been codified in this document—now the heavy lifting begins. To preserve Long Lake for your children and grandchildren some stewardship is needed. With an association consisting of willing volunteers but limited resources, this won't be the easiest of tasks, and at times it can feel like progress is moving at a snail's pace. But looking back on the LLPA organization over the past few years, and how far we have come with our overall structure and other accomplishments, we can truly visualize the adage that “many hands make light work.”

That's where YOU as an LLPA member and Long Lake resident come in. We need more of the “many hands” to help advance the goals of the Lake Management Plan and help protect OUR lake. Please don't say you're too busy to save the lake. It's really not an option for any of us as we navigate the world of invasive species, climate change, and other natural and man-made threats to our environs.

Besides, can you believe that being on a LLPA committee can be fun? As a personal testimony, I have met several terrific people serving on the SCBC committee and now consider them among my new friends all up

and down the lake. Thanks to modern technology most of our regular meetings are handled via video conference and take only about an hour a month. Other assignments are then done individually or in smaller groups, and, since it's an all-volunteer operation the pace might vary. At any rate, it's a great way to meet new people and help protect the lake in a small way.

So what opportunities are there for you? Our LLPA structure is set up with the following committees allowing any at-large member to serve and help in some capacity:

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for membership and event coordination. If you are a party-planner or social type, this could be for you. The Operations Committee works to promote LLPA membership, send welcome packets and thank you notes, and assist with general membership communications. The committee also assists with preparations for the Annual Meeting, Ice Cream Social, clothing sales, and other LLPA events.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

Haven't we all enjoyed the annual calendar these past few years? The Education Committee is in charge of the annual calendar development along with the Spring and Fall newsletters. This committee is responsible for distributing educational materials pertinent to Long Lake in the form of constant contact, emails, social media, newsletters, website updates, etc. If you like to dabble with social media, or have an affinity for writing, this committee could be calling you.

MONITORING COMMITTEE

Here is an opportunity to do some hands-on science. This committee is responsible for monitoring the ecological condition of Long Lake and its watershed. Projects related to this committee include but are not limited to: Citizen Lake Monitoring of water quality, water levels, AIS, Clean Boats Clean Waters, and Loon Watch.

SHORELINE AND WATERSHED RESTORATION COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for assessing Long Lake's shoreline and watershed for preservation, restoration, and enhancement opportunities. Projects include shoreline habitat assessments, promoting the installation of Healthy Lakes best management practices (rain gardens, diversions, rock infiltrations, native plantings), monitoring for invasive species, and, in conjunction with Camp Tomahawk and the Long Lake Chamber, performing Fish Sticks installations.

SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING COMMITTEE (SCBC)

This committee is responsible for the development and promotion of strategies to increase LLPA membership, retention of members, LLPA capacity, donations, volunteers, revenue, planning documents, and grant awards. This committee coordinates directly with the Long Lake Science Director to help manage projects related to the Lake Management Plan. Overall, the SCBC works to ensure that the LLPA will exist at a high functioning level in perpetuity. Organization, project management, and some financial capability are all traits that are invaluable to this committee.

What type of involvement looks good to you? Can you spare an hour or two per month to help protect your lake for future generations? We look forward to seeing you at our next committee meeting and making new friends! If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact Sandy Campbell via phone or text at (708) 912-0954 or any of the board members listed on the website at www.longlakellpa.org.



P.O. Box 336
Birchwood, WI 54817

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EAU CLAIRE, WI
PERMIT # 1557



— Photo by Joe Thrasher